

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 04754 110418Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 CAB-05
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
FAA-00 L-03 /037 W
-----077919 110419Z /75

O P 101657Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 4754

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, ELAB, IS

SUBJECT: EL AL SHUTDOWN

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 4702 (B) JERUSALEM 1017

1. EMBASSY DOES NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE SITUATION IS AS DIFFICULT AS STATED REFTEL B. UNDOUBTEDLY INDIVIDUAL TRAVELERS HAVE BEEN DELAYED BUT REPORTS FROM LOCAL TRAVEL AGENCIES AND FROM TWA ARE THAT SUCH DELAYS ARE AT THE MOST TWO OR THREE DAYS. GROUPS OVER FOUR PERSONS ARE ENCOUNTERING LONGER DELAYS IF THE MEMBERS INSIST ON TRAVELING OTGETHER. FOREIGN AIRLINES ARE OPERATING EXTRA SECTIONS TO CARRY EL AL TICKETED PASSENGERS.

2. MOST SERIOUS SITUATION CONCERNS TEL AVIV-TEHRAN ROUTE BECAUSE ONLY ONE OTHER FOREIGN AIRLINE OPERATES OVER THIS ROUTE BUT NOT ON A DAILY BASIS. SOME TEHRAN DESTINED PASSENGERS ARE FLYING TO ISTANBUL TO MAKE CONNECTING FLIGHTS TO TEHRAN FROM THERE. THIS, IN TURN, HAS CAUSED DELAYS FOR PASSENGERS WAITING TO LEAVE TEL AVIV FOR ISTANBUL ON OTHER FLIGHTS.

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3. DELAYS OF THREE WEEKS MENTIONED REFTEL B ARE NOT REPORTED BY EMBASSY'S CONTACTS ALTHOUGH INCOMING TRAVELERS WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO MADE SURE THAT THIER RESERVATIONS TO LEAVE ISRAEL ARE CONFIRMED ON OTHER AIRLINES UNTIL STRIKE IS OVER.

4. HISTADRUT HAS ASKED TEL AVIV DISTRICT LABOR COURT

TO RULE IMMEDIATELY ON WHETHER EL AL'S UNILATERAL OBROGATION
OF CONTRACT AND CESSATION OF PASSENGER SERVICE IS LEGAL.
COURT HAS POSTPONED RULING ON ISSUE UNTIL EVENING
APRIL 10, WHILE EL AL MANAGEMENT AND HISTADRUT NEGOTIATE
POSSIBLE VOLUNTARY RESUMPTION OF SERVICES.
HISTADRUT HAS REJECTED COMPANY INSISTANCE ON 11 CONDITIONS,
BUT HAS OFFERED EIGHT MONTHS EXTENSION OF CURRENT CONTRACT,
NO-STRIKE PLEDGE, AND APPLICATION OF 15 PERCENT GENERAL
WAGE INCREASE NEGOTIATED FOR PRIVATE SECTOR. AT THE
END OF EIGHT MONTHS A NEW AGREEMENT IS TO COME INTO
FORCE. IN THE MEANTIME ALL EL AL EMPLOYEES HAVE
RESUMED WORK. ALTHOUGH NO FLIGHTS ARE OPERATING, FLIGHT
CREWS REMAIN ON STANDBY. IF EL AL AND HISTADRUT
AGREE COURT WILL VACATE COMPLAINT. QUESTION OF EARLY
RESUMPTION OF SERVICES WILL DEPEND ON NEGOTIATIONS THIS
AFTERNOON OR ON COURT DECISION.
LEWIS

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